

Issue 3: Teacher Induction Programs (Information Only)

Teacher induction programs are intended to provide a support structure for beginning teachers. This informational item is included to update the subcommittee about recent issues affecting teacher induction programs in California, in light of the changes to state funding for teacher induction programs during the past few years, notably:

- From 2009-10 to 2012-13, the state provided local education agencies (LEAs) with spending flexibility intended to help them manage their budgets during challenging fiscal times. Specifically, LEAs were allowed to use funding for about 40 K-12 categorical education programs for the purposes of those programs or any other educational purpose. The Teacher Credentialing Block Grant, which provided state funding for the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction program, was among those programs that LEAs could decide to continue funding or redirect the funding to other educational purposes.
- In the 2013-14 budget, the state eliminated the separate funding streams for the majority of K-12 categorical education programs, including the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant, in order to redirect those monies for allocation to LEAs under the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and its accountability framework. Under that framework, LEAs have much greater flexibility to spend their funding allocations in support of state and local educational priorities than they did when the funds were restricted through categorical programs. There is no requirement for LEAs to spend LCFF monies on teacher induction programs.

It is important for the Legislature to assess how the elimination of dedicated state funding for teacher induction programs impacts (a) the availability and the quality of local induction programs across the state, and (b) the new teachers that must access these programs to fulfill their requirements for a clear teaching credentialing.

In addition, these issues should be examined due to the role teacher induction plays in teacher retention. Maintaining access to high quality teacher induction programs is a critical strategy for improving teacher retention. Teacher retention is an ongoing issue, but it is particularly relevant if there is a teacher shortage. While this is not currently the situation, and many beginning teachers have experienced lay-offs in recent years due to education budget cuts, other factors (such projected growth in student enrollments, and projected statewide increases in teacher retirements) could drive a demand for new teachers in future years.

In fact, recent data on enrollment in teacher preparation programs and the issuance of new teaching credentials points to a shrinking teacher workforce in California. According to the CTC's most recent annual report to the Legislature, in 2011–12, California saw a **12 percent** decrease in the number of newly-issued teaching credentials. This decrease is across all three types of preliminary teaching credentials and represents the eighth consecutive year in which the total number of initial teaching credentials issued has declined. Additionally, enrollment in teacher preparation programs has also dropped, as much as **33 percent** over the five-year period ending in 2010–11.

Induction Program Completion is Required for a Teaching Credential

In order to teach in a California public school, a teacher must have a teaching credential that is issued by the CTC. There are four basic teaching credentials that reflect the subject matter taught in schools: the Single Subject Teaching Credential, the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential, the Education Specialist Instruction Credential, and the Designated Subjects Teaching Credential.

To help ensure that individuals are prepared for teaching, the state has established requirements to receive a preliminary teaching credential and to advance to earn a clear teaching credential. Among these requirements, beginning teachers who have a preliminary credential must, in order to earn a clear credential, participate in a standards-based teacher induction program that has been approved by the CTC, if such an approved program is available. If such an induction program is not available to a teacher, the state allows for a contingency option for the teacher to complete a university Clear Credential program that has been approved by the CTC. Clear Credential programs have been referred to as “light” induction programs because they provide less intense mentoring, support, and guidance, and are significantly limited in availability.

Upon receiving the preliminary credential, a new teacher has five years to earn the clear credential. The requirement for completion of teacher induction is the result of teacher preparation legislation enacted in 1998, SB 2042 (Alpert), Chapter 548, Statutes of 1998, and 2004 AB 2210 (Liu), Chapter 343, Statutes of 2004.

Several years earlier, in 1992, the state created the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Induction Program (BTSA) to provide an effective transition for all beginning elementary and secondary teachers into teaching. Subsequent legislation enacted in 1998 and 2004 significantly expanded and changed the BTSA program. Specifically, the state established that the completion of a BTSA induction program is the preferred route for a new teacher to obtain a clear teaching credential.

Background on BTSA Induction Programs

The BTSA Induction Program provides beginning teachers, during their first two years of teaching, with standards-based, individualized advice and assistance that combines the application of theory learned in the preliminary teacher preparation program with mentor-based support and formative assessment. Historically, the program has been jointly administered by the CTC and the California Department of Education (CDE); however, CDE’s infrastructure for supporting the program was eliminated in 2009 when the program underwent changes to state funding.

California Education Code 44279.1 establishes the following statutory purposes of the BTSA Induction Program:

- ☐ Provide an effective transition into teaching for first-year and second-year teachers in California.
- ☐ Improve the education performance of pupils through improved training, information, and assistance for new teachers.
- ☐ Enable beginning teachers to be effective in teaching pupils who are culturally, linguistically, and academically diverse.
- ☐ Ensure the professional success and retention of new teachers.
- ☐ Ensure that a support provider provides intensive individualized support and assistance for each participating beginning teacher.
- ☐ Improve the rigor and consistency of individual teacher performance assessment results and the usefulness of assessment results to teachers and decision makers.
- ☐ Establish an effective, coherent system of performance assessments that is based on the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)* adopted by the Commission in 1997.
- ☐ Examine alternative ways in which the general public and the educational profession may be assured that new teachers who remain in teaching have attained acceptable levels of professional competence.
- ☐ Ensure that an individual induction plan is in place for each participating new teacher and is based on an ongoing assessment of the development of the beginning teacher.
- ☐ Ensure continuous, ongoing program improvement through research, development, and evaluation.

Induction programs must meet state standards. To become a BTSA induction program, a local program must be approved by the CTC and comply with the Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Teacher Induction Programs, which the CTC established in 2002, and last revised in 2013.

Under these state standards, formative assessment is a cornerstone of BTSA induction. The standards require the participating teacher and the support provider to collaboratively collect, analyze, and act upon evidence of the teacher's practice. BTSA Induction programs may use the no-cost state-developed formative assessment system known as the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) or a locally developed formative assessment system that meets the state standards.

Since 2009, BTSA induction programs have been part of the CTC's accreditation system. Through that process, BTSA programs must verify that they continue to comply with the state induction program standards.

Induction Programs are generally operated by Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Local BTSA induction programs may be offered by school districts, county offices of education, and institutions of higher education (IHEs). Historically, nearly all of the programs have been operated by individual school districts and county offices of education or consortia of LEAs. However, recently some IHEs have created induction programs, which may be indicative of a belief in the field that LEAs will discontinue or change their induction programs now that they have more discretion whether to spend resources on induction or other programs.

Presently, there are 156 approved BTSA induction programs across the state, including 152 programs offered by individual LEAs or consortia of LEAs and four programs offered by IHEs (including one operated by the University of California, Los Angeles and three operated by private colleges and universities). There are three additional IHE-sponsored programs in the CTC initial review process at this time.

As comparison, during 2008-09 (before LEAs received flexibility to redirect state funding for BTSA programs to other educational purposes), there were 169 approved BTSA induction programs statewide. During the last few years, a total of 13 LEA-sponsored induction programs have ceased operation (including 11 programs that were declared inactive and two programs that were withdrawn).

The CTC does not have reliable data on the number of school districts and charter schools that do not participate in BTSA Induction programs. Of the local agencies that are known not to participate in BTSA Induction programs, the majority are Regional Occupational Centers and Programs, and the remainder are very small school districts and charter schools.

Local programs are organized into clusters around the state that are supported by Cluster Region Directors. This regional infrastructure provides technical assistance to local BTSA programs, facilitates local program consortia, and helps facilitate accreditation site visits to local programs, among other activities. In the past, state funding was allocated for this regional support network, but that is no longer the case due to changes in state funding for the program.

Teacher Retention

Teacher retention is the primary measure that the state uses in assessing the impact of BTSA. Approved BTSA programs are required to submit data on teacher retention to the CTC annually. The teacher retention data reported in 2008 showed that about nine out of every ten teachers (87 percent) who had been in a BTSA program were still teaching five years later. However, data from 2010 showed a lower five-year retention rate at about three out of every four teachers (74.7 percent). This decline could be the result of many factors, including lay-offs of beginning teachers in recent years due to education budget cuts.

In 2012, the Educator Excellence Task Force, which was convened by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torklakson, issued its report that addressed teacher induction, among other areas of teacher development and support. The task force report described BTSA as “one of the first well-designed programs in the nation for providing mentoring to beginning teachers, found to improve effectiveness and dramatically reduce turnover for novice teachers.” However, it also indicated that, in recent times, the program has been negatively impacted by state budget cuts, and currently there is an uneven quality of programs across the state.

State Funding for BTSA Induction Programs

For many years, the state provided dedicated funding for BTSA programs as part of the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant, and this funding was distributed to LEA programs based on a per-participating teacher allocation. To receive this state funding, LEAs were required to make a local in-kind contribution. The in-kind contribution was \$2,000 per participating teacher. (IHEs were not eligible for this funding.) In 2008-09, state funding provided more than \$4,000 per participating teacher. At that level of dedicated funding, school districts and county offices of education offered induction programs to beginning teachers at no charge to the teacher. Since 2009-10, however, there have been major changes to state funding for BTSA programs.

First, as part of the 2009-10 state budget SB 4 X3 (Ducheny), Chapter 12, Statutes of 2009, the state provided LEAs with certain spending flexibility to help them manage their budgets during difficult fiscal times. This flexibility was later extended through 2012-13. Under this flexibility, LEAs were allowed to use funds from about 40 categorical programs, including the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant (which funds BTSA programs), to implement those categorical programs or redirect the funds to any other educational purpose. Thus, during those four years, LEAs had discretion whether to fund BTSA induction programs or use the funds intended for those programs for other educational services.

As part of that flexibility provision, the state specified that funding allocations for those categorical programs would be based on 2008-09 LEA funding levels rather than the previous factors used to allocate the funds. As a result, from 2009-10 through 2012-13, LEAs received allocations for BTSA programs based on their funding allocation in 2008-09, rather than the number of teachers that participated in induction programs during those years. At this time, the state also ended the requirement for the local in-kind contribution as a match to the state funding.

In 2012, the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) surveyed school districts about how they had used the categorical funding flexibility. Of the 470 school districts that responded to the survey, more than half of those districts used this flexibility to shift some amount of funding away from BTSA programs. In addition, the CTC reported that the funding shift away from BTSA programs has caused some erosion of the state-level and regional-level infrastructure that supports BTSA.

In the 2013-14 budget, the state eliminated the separate funding streams for the majority of K-12 categorical education programs, including the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant, in order to redirect those monies for allocation to LEAs under the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and its accountability framework. Under that framework, LEAs will have much greater flexibility to spend their funding allocations in support of state and local educational priorities than they did when the funds were restricted through categorical programs. There is no requirement for LEAs to spend LCFF funds on BTSA programs.

The table below shows the amount of state funding that has been provided for BTSA programs annually since 1995-96 and the number of teachers who have participated in these programs during the same time-period.

As shown in the table, the program was in expansion from 1995-96 until 2007-08 when both state funding for the program (\$128 million) and the number of participating teachers (28,264 teachers) both reached a peak. During the next few years, the number of participating teachers declined significantly through 2010-11 (to 13,300 teachers) and then began to increase again.

Year	BTSA Induction	
	Number of Teachers Participating	State Funding (in millions)
1995-1996	1,800	\$5.5
1996-1997	2,500	\$7.5
1997-1998	5,200	\$17.5
1998-1999	12,410	\$66.0
1999-2000	23,500	\$72.0
2000-2001	24,500	\$87.4
2001-2002	22,253	\$84.6
2002-2003	21,735	\$88.1
2003-2004	21,064	\$88.1
2004-2005	20,339	\$85.9
2005-2006	25,810	\$81.9
2006-2007	28,264	\$103.0
2007-2008	30,118	\$128.7
2008-2009	27,280	\$108.9
2009-2010	17,982	\$90.4*
2010-2011	13,300	\$90.4*
2011-2012	14,689	\$90.4*
2012-2013	16,354	\$90.4*
2013-2014	18,591	--

From 2009-10 to 2012-13, the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant was among the many categorical education programs for which the state funding was made flexible and allowed to be used for the purpose of that categorical program or any other educational purpose. Thus, LEAs were not required to spend these funds for teacher induction programs during those years. In 2013-14, the state eliminated the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant and many other categorical programs in order to redirect the monies associated with those programs into the new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The LCFF funding, in 2013-14, includes \$90.4 million that previously was provided for the BTSA Induction program.

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Current Status of Teacher Induction

During the CTC's meeting in February 2014, the Commission received a staff report about the status of BTSA induction programs, based on information that was gathered from programs during fall 2013. This report indicated that overall, local programs are currently in flux as program sponsors determine how induction programs should function in the new era under the LCFF. For instance, in the current year, some programs are not enrolling or supporting first year teachers.

The report raised concerns regarding the continuing availability of induction programs in some areas of the state, the continuing quality of programs given changes in funding, and the impact on beginning teacher ability to access CTC-approved induction programs to clear their credentials.

The report noted that many local programs are developing fee structures in order to charge teachers for participating in an induction program. The four programs sponsored by IHEs already charge participating teachers tuition.

According to the report, the current outlook for local induction programs in 2014-15 reflects a range of plans to:

- ☐ Continue to operate programs as in the past without charging participating teachers
- ☐ Continue to operate but planning to charge participating teachers
- ☐ Continue to operate consortium programs but not serve all the same district partners
- ☐ Close programs

The report highlights the following options as being presently available to teachers whose employers are not sponsoring or partnering to offer an induction program:

- ☐ Enroll in an induction program offered by a college or university
- ☐ Enroll in an induction program sponsored by a neighboring district or a county office of education if the program accepts such participants
- ☐ Enroll in an on-line induction program
- ☐ Complete a Clear Credential program, if the teacher's employer verifies that induction is not available to that teacher or the teacher must satisfy certain requirements under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Currently there are 21 CTC-approved clear credential programs that are operated by universities, not LEAs)

The report identifies both (a) short-term actions the CTC could take to help inform teachers about their options for earning a clear credential and (b) long-term options the CTC could consider to reform components of teacher preparation in order to ensure the quality of teacher induction.

Superintendent's Educator Excellence Task Force

In September 2012, the Educator Excellence Task Force, which was convened by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, issued a report entitled "Greatness by Design: Supporting Outstanding Teaching to Sustain a Golden State." In that report, the task force indicated the following:

"Mentoring for beginners is decreasing. California once led the nation in the design and funding of beginning teacher induction through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. Its early successes demonstrated that attrition can be reduced and competence increased for novices who receive skillful mentoring in their first years on the job. However, these funds are no longer protected for this mission. As a result, fewer and fewer teachers receive the benefits of high-quality mentoring in the state. Novice school leaders rarely receive mentoring in California, unlike states that have developed policies to provide it."

Among the task force's recommendations is that the state strengthen and reinvest in BTSA programs.

Staff Comments. In light of this information, the Legislature may want to consider legislative options (such as dedicated funding for teacher induction and other approaches) to support teachers' access to high-quality teacher induction programs.